

In and around Fitzroy

A message from the Regional Director

Welcome to the December edition of Local Links for 2011, our locally focused newsletter that is aimed at providing communities in central Queensland with the latest information on road projects and activities across the Fitzroy Region.

The installation of the next set of traffic signals in Emerald at the intersection of the Gregory Highway (Clermont Street) and Capricorn Highway (Ruby Street) is set to start in early 2012 once service relocations have begun. It is expected that the traffic signals will be operational by mid-2012.

An Emerald area transport study is about to start which will look at future needs and transport options including state-controlled roads, rail, passenger transport and active transport. This study will be undertaken in close collaboration with the Central Highlands Regional Council and is expected to take 12 months to complete.

Traditionally the wettest months for central Queensland are December and January. The Fitzroy Region is in the process of preparing for the rainfall and localised flooding that may impact the local state-controlled road network during this period. For information about the conditions of the state-controlled road network in Central Queensland please visit www.131940.qld.gov.au.

With the festive season fast approaching I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas. If you are travelling on the roads, please take care to ensure you arrive at your destination safely. Remember, stop-revive-survive this Christmas break.

Terry Hill – Regional Director (Fitzroy)

Project updates

Gracemere Industrial Access Project – Capricorn Highway

In August 2011, the Honourable Anna Bligh MP, Premier and Minister for Reconstruction, announced \$50 million funding to guarantee construction of the industrial overpass and bridge access road.

Historically, development of the Gracemere–Stanwell industrial precinct has been limited due to height restrictions for vehicles crossing the electrified Blackwater rail line to access industrial land.

In June 2010, the Premier announced state funding of \$10 million to commence planning and preliminary works for an overpass to provide access to industrial land south of the Capricorn Highway, outside of Gracemere.

Over the past 12 months, Transport and Main Roads, in collaboration with Rockhampton Regional Council, Queensland Rail, Department of Infrastructure and Planning and the community have undertaken community consultation, planning, design and commenced on-site preconstruction works.

The process of seeking a contractor to build the overpass and associated infrastructure closed on 18 November 2011. Construction of the Gracemere Industrial Access Project is expected to start in early 2012 and be open to traffic early 2013, weather permitting.



Stoney Creek Bridge realignment – Byfield Road (Capricorn Coast)

In November 2010, Transport and Main Roads began the upgrade of Byfield Road at Stoney Creek to provide improved access to the town as well as the nearby national park.

The \$6.5 million Stoney Creek project will realign a one-kilometre section of Byfield Road and construct a two-lane concrete bridge across Stoney Creek. The new two-lane bridge will be more than four metres higher than the existing single-lane creek crossing.

The project remains on track for completion by the end of December 2011.

New bridge over the Dawson River for Baralaba community

A new high-level bridge over the Dawson River at Baralaba is one step closer to being built, with TMR and Cockatoo Coal Limited entering into an agreement to jointly fund construction of the vital link.

The department committed \$8 million toward the new bridge and road approaches, which is estimated to be \$16 million, with Cockatoo Coal providing the remainder.

The new higher-level two-lane concrete bridge will be 4.2 metres higher than the existing low-lying, single lane structure that was constructed in 1930. REED Constructions commenced work in August this year on the new structure which will involve replacing the existing bridge and improving the approaches on both sides.



For community and industry, this means fewer disruptions during the wet season, which in recent times has caused significant hardship. The new bridge will provide improved access for both the community and for Cockatoo Coal.

It is expected that the bridge will be completed early in 2012, weather permitting.

Burnett Highway – widening works



The \$7.5 million Burnett Highway (Hodgetts to Argoon Roads) project is located between Dululu and Biloela. This project includes the widening of approximately nine kilometres of the highway to a nine metre bitumen seal, culvert extension, property access upgrades and intersection improvement works.

Stabilisation works have now started on the northern end of the project with approximately 50% of earthworks now completed.

The project commenced in June 2011 and is being undertaken by Banana Shire Council. It is expected to be completed early in 2012, weather permitting.

Works being undertaken as part of Operation Queenslander

Central Queensland is well on the road to recovery since the devastating floods over the 2010/11 Christmas period with many damaged roads under reconstruction as part of the Operation Queenslander recovery effort.

Nearly one third of the region's 3500 kilometres of state-controlled roads were damaged by the significant flooding and weather events. To reconstruct these roads almost \$1 billion is being invested in the central Queensland road network over the next few years.

Further to the immediate works that provided temporary measures to reopen the region's roads after these events, Transport Main Roads has been awarded \$229 million of road reconstruction contracts in the region, with many works already underway on the Bruce Highway, Capricorn Highway, Gregory Highway and Byfield Road.

Operation Queenslander is the largest reconstruction effort in the state's history, rebuilding communities, fixing infrastructure and restoring regional economies in 2010/11 after flooding and cyclone events. Operation Queenslander is being delivered under Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements, a joint federal and state initiative.

Under these arrangements, the Australian Government provides 75% of the funding, with 25% from the Queensland Government.

To reconstruct the network as quickly and as safely as possible, the significant work packages are being delivered for Transport Main Roads by a combination of contracts awarded to local councils, RoadTek and private contractors. To protect motorists and staff, traffic signals, traffic controllers, single lane closures and speed restrictions are being used as required. Speed restrictions within roadwork sites are in place for safety reasons and are enforceable by police.

Motorists should drive to the changed traffic conditions and obey all signage for their own safety and the safety of roadworkers. Motorists should allow extra time to reach their destinations and include additional rest stops on their journey.

Transport Main Roads understands stopping several times along a stretch of road can be frustrating, however delays are to be expected as this important regional road reconstruction program is delivered. To help accommodate the increased Christmas traffic, reconstruction work sites will close down on 16 December 2011 and resume after the peak of the traffic has passed on 9 January 2012.

For up-to-date information on roadworks and other traffic disruptions, visit www.131940.qld.gov.au or call 13 19 40.

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